Community Circle Coordinator Annual Report

Church year 2025-26

Membership Committee

UCH's dynamic Membership Committee continued to meet monthly this year to offer activities that welcome visitors and church members. Thank you to Darren Howard, Susan Mooney, Mary Getty, Sandra Buboltz, Zia Karim Gemma Gunther and new members Jill Sprague and Diane Ferrando. The committee continued its efforts to reach out and welcome visitors, both at church and on You Tube, with a greeting card for guests and a welcoming e-mail from a Guest Ambassador or another member of the team. The committee records show UCH welcomed approximately 50 visitors in church year 2025 - 2026 as of 5/17/26 including 13 children and youth.

The Guest Ambassador role was a new aspect the membership committee started in 2025 and has expanded in 2026. There are now 2 Guest Ambassadors that share the role of enhanced welcoming of visitors and guide guests to the welcome desk. The Ambassadors also e-mail visitors the week after their visit to answer questions or connect guests with church staff and programs.

The membership committee also supports and cares for current members and friends through the Caring Circle.

Caring Circles

Our Caring Circle Program is designed to make sure that all our members feel cared for and are offered support when they need it. The Caring Circle Team is divided into eight geographical locations and there are two captains for each area. When we hear of a caring concern or a celebration the caring captains will reach out and see what is needed or what can be done in support or celebration. We enhanced the Caring Circle Program this year by hosting a kickoff luncheon to engage new members to the Circle and redistribute the Caring Circle areas.

PlayReadingGroup

This year, the Community Circle worked with key UCH members to revitalize the Play Reading group by hosting two Play Reading events. Plans are in the works to continue the Play Reading group in fiscal year 2027 as well.

Newcomer's Breakfasts

Again this year, the Membership Committee hosted quite a number of welcome breakfasts for visitors, guests and friends who are new to the church as a way to help newcomers get to know members and other newcomers. The breakfasts are informal and offer newcomers an opportunity to ask questions about our denomination, UCH and how to get involved in church life.

New UU Workshops

The membership committee, Pam Fodor and Rev. Beth Johnson planned and presented two, two session New UU classes this year. Topics included a study of personal religious or spiritual journeys, UU history, the History of UCH, what UU's believe and how to get involved.

New Members

We have welcomed 24 new members this year. We are so happy our church family continues to grow. We welcome our new members to participation in UCH activities including our celebrations singers choir, social justice programs including animal ministry, prison ministry, and pride activities of the LGBTQA+ Welcoming Congregation team.

Hospitality Teams

We are grateful for all members and friends who are active participants of our Hospitality Team Program. Each member of our church is a participant on a team that provides hospitality duties on Sunday mornings such as making coffee and being greeters or ushers. It is a wonderful plan that helps everyone be involved in providing a welcoming spirit. Thank you to our Team Leaders; Pat Gwozdz, Susan Stephens, Thom Brackett, Darren Howard, Megan Griffin, Julia Beckman, Diana and Eric Haas, Zia Karim, Mary Getty.

Care Shawl Group

The Care Shawl Group was started about 2008 to make shawls to be given to church members. The group gives shawls for change of life situations. Usually, it is for health-related issues, but it could be for happy times, like a graduation, wedding, or birth of a child. To date these caring folks have given more than 320 shawls. The shawls are knit and crocheted out of machine washable yarn for easy care. The shawls are made by church members who meet four times a year. When we meet, we discuss who needs shawls and we have a simple ceremony to bless shawls made since we last gathered. When a shawl is given, it is accompanied by a card that tells about the Care Shawl Group and the ceremony we have to bless each shawl made. When a person gets a shawl, it is put around their shoulders with a hug and the person is told they are being thought about.

The group wants to make sure that nobody is forgotten. We listen to see who needs a shawl. Everyone is encouraged to let the group know who needs a shawl. We are always looking for new members of the group. Special thank you to Nancy Weill for her continued leadership of this group.

Friday Faith, Fun and Fellowship Nights

Due to low participation, the Friday Faith, Fun and Fellowship Nights were paused this year. With the addition of new members, the Committee will consider starting the Friday events again in the 2026 - 2027 church year.

Game Nights

Thanks again this year to Matt Brown for continuing to coordinate and host the church's monthly Game Nights on the first Friday of each month. The Game Nights have been successful with regular attendance of at least 8 players to as many as 25 players. Participants have stated they enjoy playing various games and doing puzzles with the children in attendance, along with enjoying laughter and camaraderie.

Respectfully submitted,

Darren Howard and Pam Fodor